

FISCAL NOTE
SB 3390 - HB 3514

March 14, 2004

SUMMARY OF BILL: Allows all judicial proceedings under Title 33 to be conducted using audio-video communications without the physical presence of the defendant, plaintiff, witnesses or attorneys before the court. The use of audio-video communication would be at the discretion of the court, would require the agreement of all parties and would be subject to the availability of suitable equipment. The bill also allows pleadings and certificates of need to be delivered to the court by telefax transmission.

ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT:

Increase State Expenditures - \$116,500 One-Time
\$54,000 Recurring

Increase Local Govt. Expenditures - Less than \$100,000/Permissive

Other Fiscal Impact - Audio-video conferencing of hearings under Title 33, except criminal court hearings, is projected to save \$537,000 in state expenditures annually for payroll and travel costs for staff of the regional mental health institutes if these provisions were fully implemented by the institutes and the courts that would hold these hearings.

Estimate assumes one-time increase in state expenditures for equipment installation at a cost of \$23,000 for each of the five regional mental health institutes and the increase in recurring state expenditures for communication charges of \$900 per month per institute. Local governments where these institutes are located would incur the costs of installing the equipment and communication charges if they choose to participate in this method of conducting hearings. Approximately 12,423 hearings annually could be conducted by audio-video communication if all parties agree.

CERTIFICATION:

This is to duly certify that the information contained herein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James W. White". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

James W. White, Executive Director